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ABSTRACT

The Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) was designed to permit schools to share the accumulated understanding of many prior schools about the migrant child and his needs. This shared migrant student information frees a school to focus its energy on serving a child's needs instead of using it to identify those needs. If the MSRTS is to be of maximum benefit to migrant students and educators alike, the student data it gathers and disseminates must be current, accurate, complete, and promptly transmitted. Thus, the system's success depends on the effectiveness of each link in the data chain--the school, the terminal, and the data bank. This handbook is a guide for MSRTS personnel. It is intended to increase awareness of the migrant student and his need for a transfer record, and to outline the responsibility of each person employed in the system toward fulfilling that need. School districts served by the Sunnyside and Othello terminals in Washington are listed. (Author/NQ)

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MSRTS

A HANDBOOK

to the migrant student record transfer system

WASHINGTON

RC008000

Since the gears to create the Migrant Student Record Transfer System began turning in 1968, nearly half a million migrant students have learned the meaning of educational continuity. But despite the tremendous gains, more remains to be accomplished. If we are to cut through the barriers that separate the migrant child from the educational system, we must continue to hone and polish the tool we work with.

The M.S.R.T.S. was designed to permit schools to share the accumulated understanding of many prior schools about the migrant child and his needs. This shared migrant student information frees a school to focus its energy on serving a child's needs instead of using it to identify those needs.

If the M.S.R.T.S. is to be of maximum benefit to migrant students and educators alike, the student data it gathers and disseminates must be current, accurate, complete and promptly transmitted. Thus the system's success depends on the effectiveness of each link in the data chain -- the school, the terminal and the data bank.

This handbook is a guide for M.S.R.T.S. personnel. It is intended to increase awareness of the migrant student and his need for a transfer record, and to outline the responsibility of each person employed in the system toward fulfilling that need.

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of Public Instruction

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[1975]

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THE MIGRANT CHILD

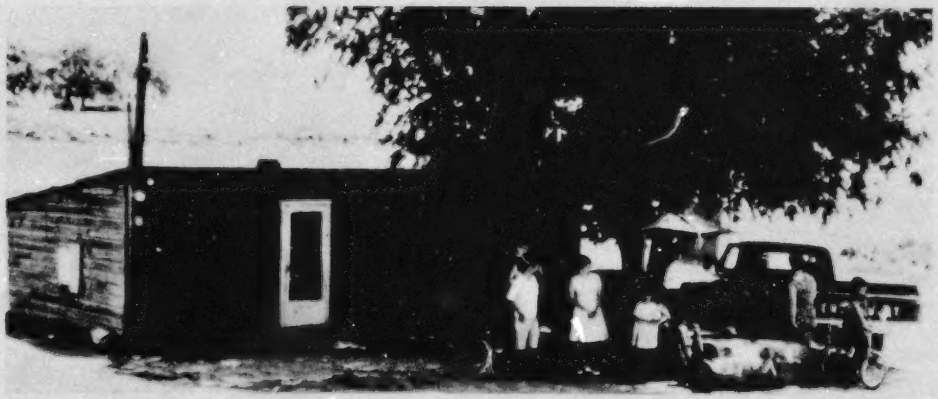
The advances in Migrant Education in serving the migrant child can be stated as yielding migrant children choices not circumstances. The commitment of offering alternatives is the beginning of the end of the vicious cycle which engulfs migrant families.

From
The Seventh National Conference
On Migrant Education

How he lives and does not learn

For more than 2.5 million migrant children in the United States, life is characterized by constant change of environment. Moving with their families from state to state, school district to school district, following the seasons in search of agricultural employment, these children know none of the stable conditions that normally make up a child's preschool education.

Migrant housing is usually inadequate — overcrowded and substandard. Influenced by his environment, the child probably does not learn a set routine of living habits; his health, and consequently his learning ability, may suffer. Temporary members of a community, the migrant child and his family receive little benefit from community services and facilities.



Unlike other children, the migrant child has little opportunity to explore the imaginary world of adolescents. His life is geared instead to the stark realities of immediate needs like food, shelter and clothing. All but the smallest children must work in the fields with their parents. A child who doesn't work is likely left to care for younger children, some of them babies, although he may be no more than 10 years old himself.

In the migrant household life is lived with little preparation for the future. Education and learning are lost to the more pressing concerns of day-to-day survival. Such reading materials as newspapers, magazines and books are likely unavailable. The migrant child may lack the experience of playing with the toys, games and other activities that aid the middle class child to develop the perceptions necessary for readiness to learn.

The migrant child is ill-prepared to take his place in the classroom. His often limited language abilities — he may not even speak English — and his lack of learning experiences put him in last place at the outset. His lifestyle keeps him educationally behind by forcing perpetual change and readjustment upon him. The rate of progress of the migrant student has been estimated at not more than .7 months for each month spent in school, and the average migrant student spends less than the usual nine months in school. This retarded progress is cumulative and eventuates in most migrants' becoming early "school leavers," poorly prepared for economic success or upward social mobility.

Who the law calls migrant

In concurrence with guidelines established by the U.S. Office of Education, Washington State defines and identifies migrant children according to the following criteria:

Interstate - A child* who has moved with a parent or guardian within the past year across state boundaries in order that a parent, guardian or member of his immediate family might secure temporary or seasonal employment in agriculture, fishery activities or in related food processing activities. The child should be expected to continue to migrate with his parent or guardian.

Intrastate - A child* who has moved with a parent or guardian within the past year across school district boundaries within a state in order that a parent, guardian or member of his immediate family might secure temporary or seasonal employment in agriculture, fishery activities or in related food processing activities.

Formerly Migrant - A child* who has been an interstate or intrastate migrant as defined above but who along with his parent or guardian has ceased to migrate within the last year and now resides in an area in which a program for migrant children is to be provided.

*Preschool to grade 12.

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THE RECORD TRANSFER SYSTEM

Born of a unique marriage of education and technology, the migrant transfer record is the migrant child's letter of achievement. It allows him to do mostly what other children do, to accomplish mostly what other children accomplish and to choose what the others are free to choose. The migrant transfer record is the migrant child's academic and health chronicle, carried by wire and by mail, from teacher to teacher, from nurse to nurse, from anyone who has served the migrant student to anyone who will serve him.

Migrating education for migrating students?

The multiplicity of the migrant student's experiences with different instructional methods, different curriculums and different teacher expectations has confounded the purpose of education. How is the migrant student to learn? Though most schools and teachers have wanted to help their migrant students, the job has been taxing.

Placement according to the age-to-grade equation doesn't work with a student whose attendance patterns are irregular, but without knowledge of a student's academic background, trial-and-error is the school's only recourse. Failure, for the student placed at too advanced a level, is self-defeating; success without challenge, for the student placed below his capability, is tiresome and useless.

By the time the migrant student is properly placed and he begins to make progress, he is gone. To another school, another teacher, another book, destined to spending his time being placed.

Health care experiences are similarly frustrating to the migrant student. Without a medical record, he is subject to repeated innoculation and health screening, yet he may suffer from needed but unprovided follow-up care.

The migrant child in school. Something had to be done to make his education more meaningful. An occasional teacher would try -- by giving the departing migrant student a letter of his achievement to carry to his next teacher. It was a good idea that didn't work very well. Too many letters were lost in the shuffle of migration. Later attempts to mail records from school to school also proved ineffective. Manual processing of inconsistently gathered data could not stand up to the demand for information.

A need for the automated transmission of migrant student academic and health information was established. If the migrant student was to have the same opportunity for success as other students, it was imperative to put continuity into his educational experience.

An alliance of education and technology

In 1966 the Congress of the United States amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to provide special funds for the education of children of migratory agricultural workers, thus officially recognizing the intense need for supplementary services to an educationally-deprived population. But despite the best efforts of government and educators alike, the solution to the problem was frustrated at the door between the migrant child and the educational system. Until an automated system for transferring uniformly compiled migrant student data could be developed, the continuity necessary for educational prosperity for migrant students would be missing.

In 1968 the state directors of migrant education gave top priority to the development and implementation of such a system to serve all states. A record transfer committee was formed and given the responsibility of initiating and coordinating the project. The first task was to develop a record form. The transfer record design objectives were six:

1. To provide relevant information with respect to the migrant child.

2. To be acceptable as a national standard.

3. To preserve continuity of information.

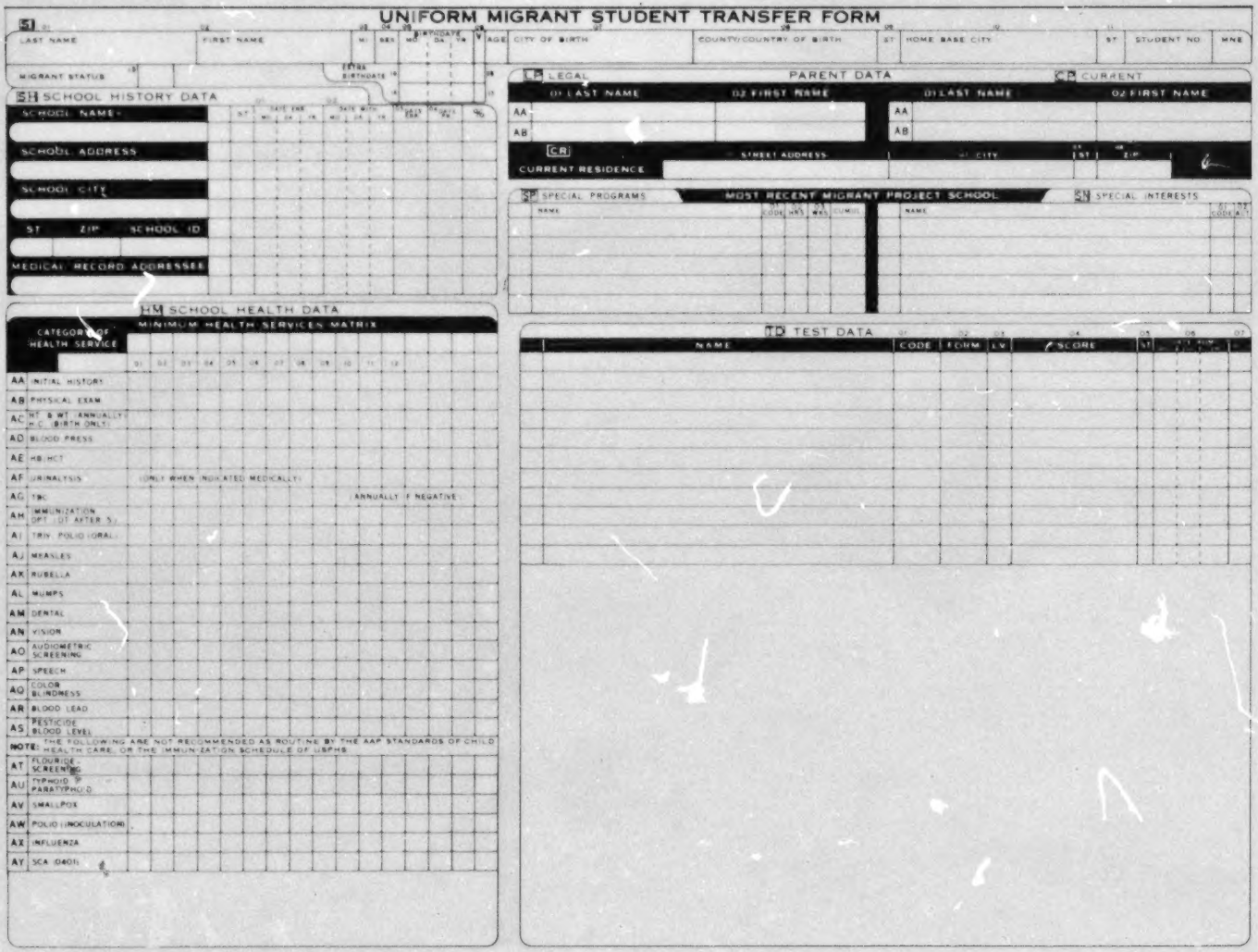
4. To provide effective record transfer.

5. To reduce clerical effort.

6. To provide data helpful in educating migrant children.

The preliminary design for a computerized record transfer system was approved by the states, and in 1969 the Arkansas Department of Education, under contract with the U.S. Office of Education, began its implementation. By 1971, the Migrant Student Record Transfer System, based in Little Rock, was fully operative, subsidized by a percentage of the migrant education allocation to each of the participating states.

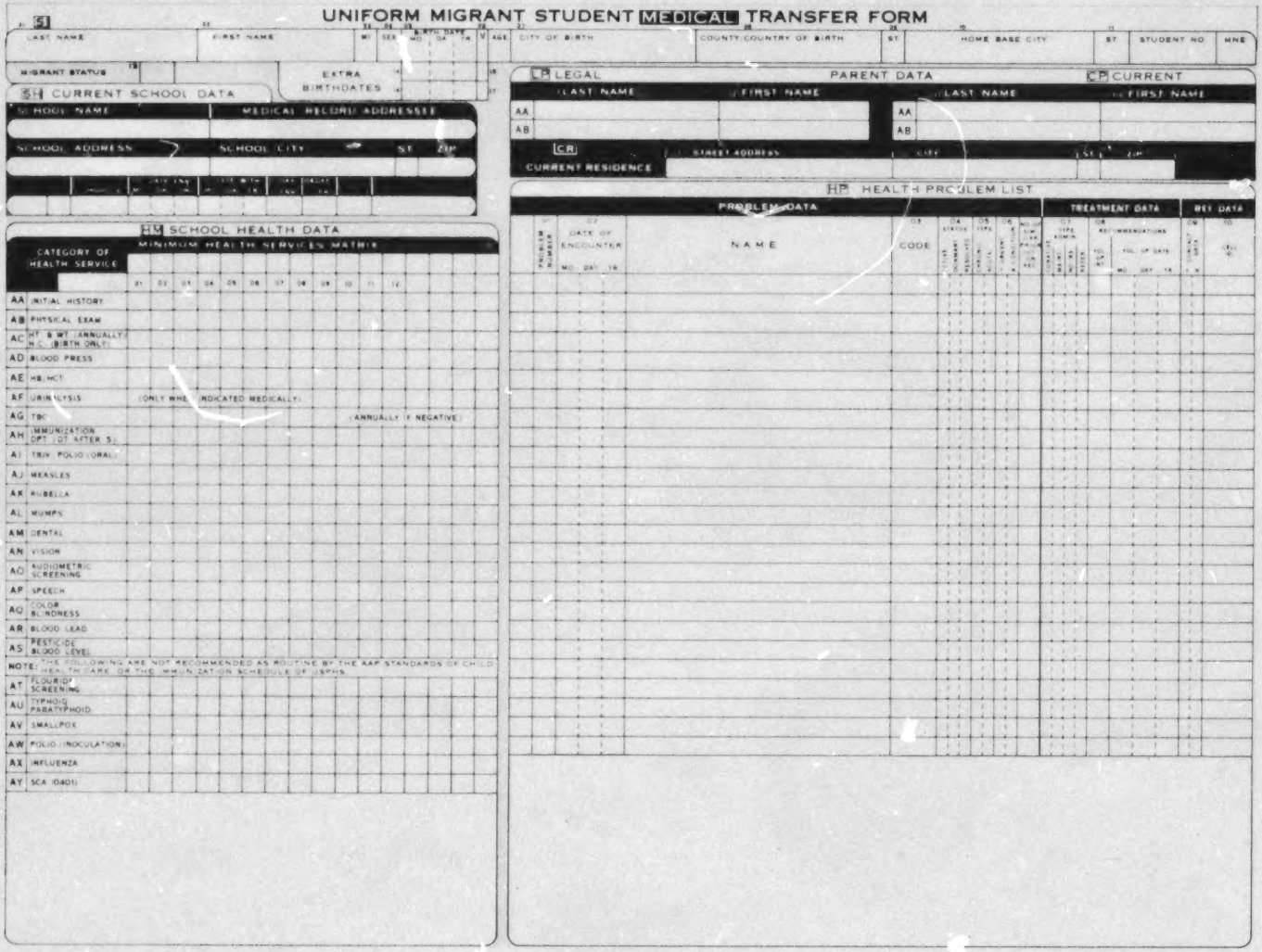
Washington State has served more than 10,000 children annually since that time. We began the transmission of migrant student data in 1971 through terminals in Sunnyside and Othello. Shortly thereafter, another Sunnyside terminal was opened along with one in Ephrata. The Ephrata terminal was moved to Moses Lake in 1973 and again in 1974 to Othello, where it remains today. Although the terminals in both cities are housed together, each serves a separate list of schools. The coupling of terminals was done to increase the efficiency of terminal operators, permitting better service to schools.



The migrant transfer record

Nine components on the Uniform Migrant Student Record forms provide basic information about the migrant student. To enable a school to better understand the migrant child's needs, the forms include:

1. Student identifying data.
2. School history data.
3. Parent data.
4. School health data.
5. Special programs data.
6. Special interests data.
7. Academic test data.
8. Credit accrual (secondary students).
9. Health problems data.



UNIFORM MIGRANT STUDENT MEDICAL TRANSFER FORM

LAST NAME | FIRST NAME | MI | SEX | BIRTH DATE MO DA YR | V | AGE | CITY OF BIRTH | COUNTY/COUNTRY OF BIRTH | ST | HOME BASE CITY | ST | STUDENT NO | MNE

MIGRANT STATUS | EXTRA BIRTHDATES

SH CURRENT SCHOOL DATA

SCHOOL NAME | MEDICAL RECORD ADDRESSEE

SCHOOL ADDRESS | SCHOOL CITY | ST | ZIP

LP LEGAL PARENT DATA CP CURRENT

	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME		LAST NAME	FIRST NAME
AA			AA		
AB			AB		

CR CURRENT RESIDENCE | STREET ADDRESS | CITY | ST | ZIP

HM SCHOOL HEALTH DATA

MINIMUM HEALTH SERVICES MATRIX

	CATEGORY OF HEALTH SERVICE	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
AA	INITIAL HISTORY												
AB	PHYSICAL EXAM												
AC	HT & WT (ANNUALLY) H.C. (BIRTH ONLY)												
AD	BLOOD PRESS												
AE	HB/HCT												
AF	URINALYSIS	(ONLY WHEN INDICATED MEDICALLY)											
AG	TBC										(ANNUALLY IF NEGATIVE)		
AH	IMMUNIZATION DPT (OT AFTER 5)												
AI	TRIV. POLIO (ORAL)												
AJ	MEASLES												
AK	RUBELLA												
AL	MUMPS												
AM	DENTAL												
AN	VISION												
AO	AUDIOMETRIC SCREENING												
AP	SPEECH												
AQ	COLOR BLINDNESS												
AR	BLOOD LEAD												
AS	PESTICIDE BLOOD LEVEL												
NOTE:	THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT RECOMMENDED AS ROUTINE BY THE AAP STANDARDS OF CHILD HEALTH CARE OR THE IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE OF USPHS.												
AT	FLOURID/ SCREENING												
AU	TYPHOID PARATYPHOID												
AV	SMALLPOX												
AW	POLIO (INOCULATION)												
AX	INFLUENZA												
AY	SCA (0401)												

HP HEALTH PROBLEM LIST

PROBLEM DATA									TREATMENT DATA								REF DATA	
01 PROBLEM NUMBER	02 DATE OF ENCOUNTER MO DAY YR	NAME	03 CODE	04 STATUS	05 TYPE	06	NO. OF SIMILAR PROBLEMS	07 TYPE KOMIN	08 RECOMMENDATIONS								09 CONTACT DATA	10 CELL ID

Called M.S.R.T.S. 2, the record forms now employed by the system were adopted in September 1973. Instead of compiling all data on one form, and sending that information in triplicate to schools, M.S.R.T.S. now uses a special medical transfer form in addition to the standard transfer form. The transfer record, designed for overall school use, contains basic health and educational data. The new medical record includes a detailed health problems list. Sent directly to the school nurse or to whoever has been designated by the school as the medical records addressee, it is to be used by medical professionals in reporting medical abnormalities of a migrant child. As well as inciting prompt attention to a student's medical problems, the medical form furthers the protection of his right to privacy.

The circular flow of information

The effectiveness of the Migrant Student Record Transfer System depends on the continual flow of information. The cycle begins when a new student enrolls in school.

Screening by the school secretary or other enrolling agent should tell if a possible migrant student has arrived. If more positive identification of the child is necessary, a home visitor might be called in. Otherwise, the flow moves on to the school's migrant records clerk, who records and codes the available student data, relaying it by phone or mail to the appropriate M.S.R.T.S. regional terminal.

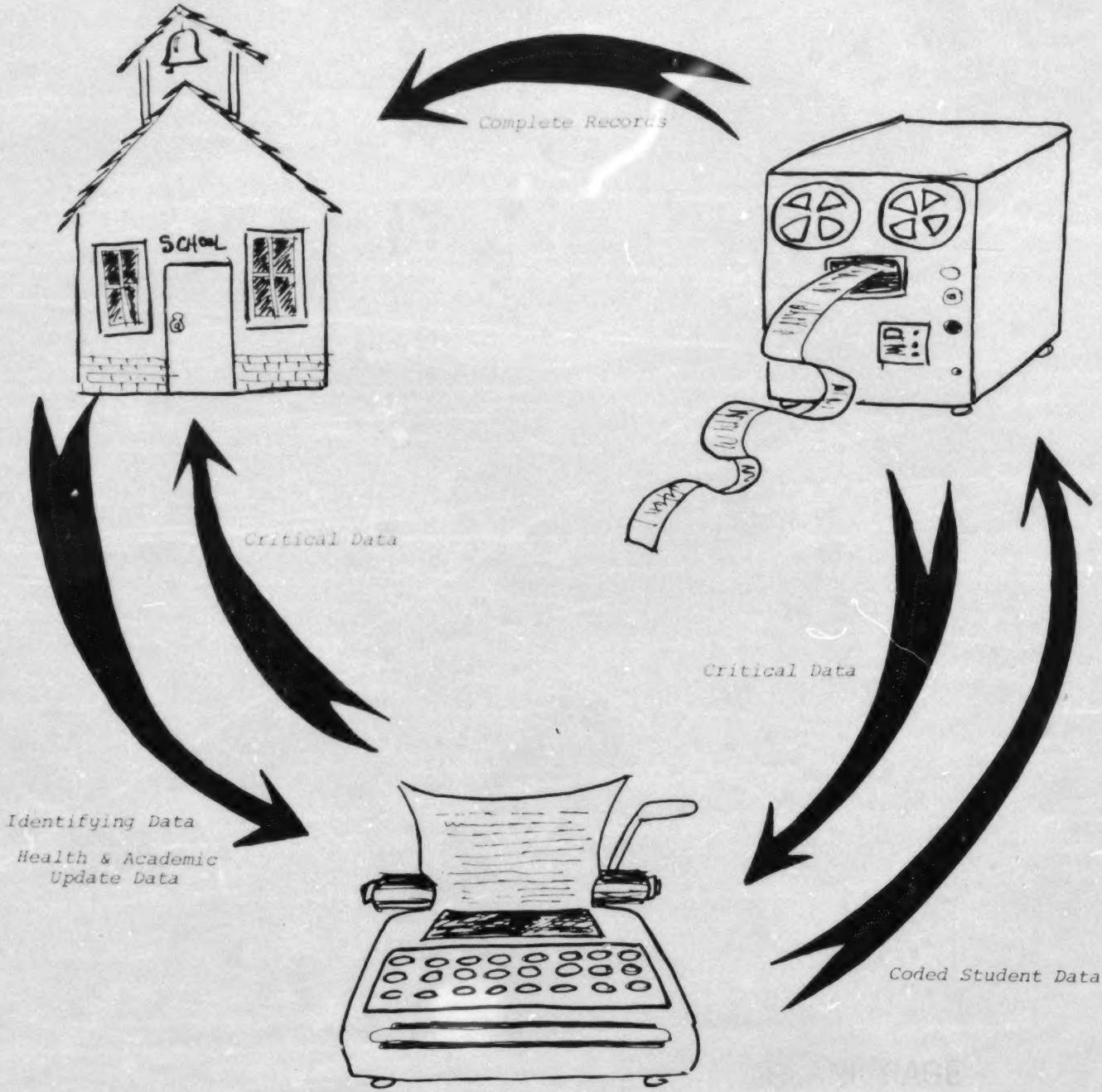
An operator there dispatches the information by teletypewriter to the national data bank. If the child already has a record in computer storage, composite data is prepared for delivery to his school. If not, the information becomes the basis for one and remains in the computer data bank until the child is terminated as a migrant student.

The computer extracts from the child's record his critical data, i.e. that information considered critical to his initial placement and care, sending it immediately through the terminal to the school. A computer printout of the complete academic and health records are then airmailed to the school. Except during the peak of migrant impaction in Washington State, the full cycle of information should take no more than one week, providing the data gathered by the school is accurate and complete.

Migrant student information begins and ends at the school. Teachers, nurses, counselors, home visitors, etc., compile updated academic and health data for transmission to the data bank. They use the information they receive to meet the needs of their migrant students. The circuit is complete but never-ending.

The M.S.R.T.S. is not limited simply to the storage and appropriate dissemination of migrant student records. Washington State educators can use system data to learn the migratory patterns of children here, which should enable them to better tailor programs to student needs and to allocate resources more effectively. Such innovations as interstate teacher exchange programs can also benefit from a knowledge of student migration.

Most importantly, M.S.R.T.S. data should be used to develop programs. From an assessment of the specific needs of individual migrant children, a program is born; it grows to encompass and fulfill the needs of all of a school's migrant students.


SCHOOL
Complete Records
Critical Data
Critical Data
Identifying Data
Health & Academic Update Data
Coded Student Data

Protecting migrant records

The Migrant Student Record Transfer System is designed to protect the privacy of migrant students as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. The following safeguards, approved by the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights, are incorporated into the system:

-- A uniform record which does not permit the entry of derogatory information about a student.

-- Only authorized educational agencies may receive individual student records. Summary statistical reports may be released from the depository to the U.S. Office of Education and to the state directors of migrant education.

-- Unauthorized terminals cannot communicate with the Little Rock computer.

-- The tape and message format used in the system is available only to authorized personnel.

-- Access to student files is protected by special security codes.

-- Specific student data is required for access to student files.

-- Access data must match precisely the data in the student's electronic file.

Emphatic of the system's security precautions, neither the depository nor the terminal will release migrant student information to parents. They can see their child's records at the school only, and the school will release records to no one other than a child's parent or legal guardian.

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PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITY

Each link in the chain that is the Migrant Student Record Transfer System is vital to its strength and perpetuity. Each person who gives and takes from the system has a responsibility to see that it works. That responsibility is an obligation -- to other states and school districts, to one's own state and school district, to the migrant child whose life betrays the snugness of boundaries.

What ought to be done at the LEA

The school's basic responsibilities in the system are to identify migrant children, to assimilate student information, to enroll migrant children on the M.S.R.T.S., to keep records up-to-date and to forward withdrawal information. Since the organization at every school is different, it is impossible to outline the specific duties of each employee. However, the responsibilities of LEA employees to the M.S.R.T.S. are as follows:

RECORDS CLERKS - All incoming and outgoing migrant student data is routed through records clerks. They code the information furnished by other school personnel and send it to the terminal operator. Print-outs received from the data bank must be checked against their records for error. They are responsible for disseminating critical data and composite data to the appropriate personnel when they receive it from the data bank. Accuracy, as well as thoroughness, is part of their job. Records clerks must seek out the required student information if it has not been provided; they must seek corrections to discrepencies. Since M.S.R.T.S.-enrolled students receive accident insurance through the system, speed of enrollment is essential to the child's well-being. Records clerks are responsible for withdrawing currently-enrolled migrant students from the M.S.R.T.S. at the end of the school year as prescribed by system regulations. They must not release student records to unauthorized persons.

TEACHERS (Counselors, Aides, Home Visitors, etc.) - Whereas records clerks are routers of migrant student information, teachers both originate and receive it. They are responsible for identifying migrant students and for informing their records clerk of updated student data, such as test and curriculum information. They use the information provided by other schools to the data bank to place the student and begin to meet his needs.

NURSES (Medical Records Addressees) - Responsible primarily for the physical well-being of migrant students, nurses must gather and pass on to their records clerk student medical data. Like teachers, they use the composite record to more effectively serve the migrant child. They must safeguard medical records, providing whatever information is necessary to the teacher and others to protect the student.

PRINCIPALS - Responsible for the education of all migrant students enrolled in their buildings, principals must insist that all staff become familiar with the M.S.R.T.S. and should encourage their teachers to use the transfer forms.

FEDERAL PROJECTS DIRECTORS (Administrators in Charge of Migrant Programs) - The implementation and operation of the M.S.R.T.S. within a school district depends upon the acquisition of migrant education funds. Obtaining them is the responsibility of such administrators. Once monies are received, they must see that the terms of the funding agreement are upheld. Further, M.S.R.T.S. data can help the federal projects director and his staff to develop migrant education programs within the district.

What ought to be done by the SEA

TERMINAL OPERATORS - The terminal operators are the middle link in the flow of information. From the transfer forms received from schools, they must screen prohibited information, such as grades and comments on a child's attitude, if it has been inadvertently included. They look for inconsistencies on the form that might indicate an error and, if necessary, check back with the records clerk for verification. However, any change must come from the school; terminal operators are not so authorized. Finally they transmit the information to the data bank, whereupon critical data is immediately wired back, through them to the school.

STATE SUPERVISOR OF M.S.R.T.S. - Responsible for the smooth functioning of the system within the state, he oversees terminal operators and provides training in system operation to both terminal operators and records clerks. He must work with all M.S.R.T.S. personnel to ensure the system is meeting its potential within the state and in cooperation with other states. M.S.R.T.S.-related questions or problems should be addressed to him.

STATE SUPERVISOR OF MIGRANT EDUCATION - As supervisor of all migrant education programming in Washington State, he must coordinate the M.S.R.T.S. with other program efforts. He works with the migrant education directors of other states to continually refine and improve the record transfer system to more effectively serve all migrant students.

The importance of each person involved with the M.S.R.T.S. cannot be overemphasized. As small or insignificant as one teacher, one records clerk or one terminal operator may seem in the kaleidoscope of a migrant child's education, each individual effort adds up to a coordination of efforts with mammoth potential. The M.S.R.T.S. machinery is established and has the capacity to make an educational dream for migrant students come true. But the computer and its system for transmitting information are of little value without productive human input. What we get out of the M.S.R.T.S. depends upon what you put in.

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TERMINAL CONNECTIONS

To provide educational continuity for the migrant child mandates a national thrust. The scope of the program exceeds state boundaries. We as educators find ourselves in a situation that demands cooperative educational planning on an interstate basis. The reason is obvious: We share the same child.

Vidal A. Rivera, Jr.
Director, Migrant Education
U.S. Office of Education

Barbara Pederson
Coordinator
Othello Migrant Records Office

School districts served by Othello terminal 1

College Place
Dayton
Kahlotus
Kennewick
Lind
North Franklin
Othello
Pasco
Prescott
Quincy
Royal
Starbuck
Walla Walla
Warden

Day care centers

Walla Walla Child Development Center
Northwest Rural Opportunities Centers

Maria Guerra
Operator
Othello Terminal #1

Phyllis DeLeon
Operator
Othello Terminal #2

School districts served by Othello terminal 2

Brewster
Bridgeport
Cashmere
Eastmont
Entiat
Ephrata
Lake Chelan
Manson
Moses Lake
Omak
Orondo
Oroville
Pateros
Peshastin-Dryden
Soap Lake
Tonasket
Wenatchee
Yakima

Alicia Mercado
Back-up Operator
Othello Terminals

Yolanda Rendon
Operator
Sunnyside Terminal #1

Yolanda Moya
Back-up Operator
Sunnyside Terminals

Margaret Lopez
Operator
Sunnyside Terminal #2

School districts served by Sunnyside terminal #1

Grandview
Granger
Mabton
Prosser
Sunnyside

Day Care Centers

NRO Center, Grandview
Yakima Headstart Child Development Center

School districts served by Sunnyside terminal #2

Bainbridge Island
Burlington-Edison
Conway
Highland
Kiona-Benton
La Conner
Lynden/Meridian
Mount Adams
Mount Vernon
Moxee
Naches
Sedro Woolley
Selah
Toppenish
Union Gap
Wapato
West Valley
Zillah

Day Care Centers

Lynden Child Development Center

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